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**Statement submitted by International Council for Education of
People with Visual Impairment, a non-governmental organization
in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council***

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.



Statement

The International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment is a global association of individuals and organizations concerned with the educational needs of children with visual impairment. We have special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and are a founding member of the United Nations Children's Fund non-governmental organization Committee on Children with Disabilities. We bring together educators, administrators, parents, and others to promote equal educational opportunity for the 19 million children under the age of 15 who have a visual impairment.

We believe that all children with vision impairment should:

- (a) Participate in a full range of high quality educational services, from infancy through post-secondary;
- (b) Be supported by teachers and other professionals who are properly trained;
- (c) Receive appropriate educational materials in alternative formats at the same time as their classmates;
- (d) Be taught with methodologies that reflect best practice;
- (e) Live in an environment free of barriers, social stigmas, and stereotypes; and
- (f) Lead productive lives according to their aspirations and capabilities.

We welcome this opportunity to contribute to the discussion on the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals. We are specifically concerned with sustainable development goal 4 (inclusive and equitable quality education; lifelong learning opportunities), but note that sustainable development goal 4 cannot be achieved without attention to all other sustainable development goals.

Accordingly, we offer the following recommendations to the Economic and Social Council and all non-governmental organizations to assure that the sustainable development goals are met:

- (a) Recognize that achieving the sustainable development goals rests heavily on the education of all citizens, regardless of socioeconomic status, disability, gender, or any other indicator.
- (b) Enforce the Marrakesh Treaty to facilitate access to published works.
- (c) Distribute technology and assistive devices that support instruction.
- (d) Train parents, inclusive and special classroom teachers, rehabilitation workers, and others who provide instruction to visually impaired children and youth, including those with multiple disabilities and deaf-blindness, in the alternative skills of blindness (e.g., braille, large print, digital technologies, orientation and mobility).
- (e) Shift the public paradigm so that persons with disabilities are seen as capable individuals who are empowered in the struggle against all forms of prejudice and discrimination.
- (f) Disaggregate data on economic and education indicators to reflect the impact on persons with disabilities.